ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

This statement meets with the requirement to produce an Internal Control Statement in accordance with Regulation 5 of the Accounts and Audit Regulations (Wales) 2014.

Part 1: SCOPE OF RESPONSIBILITY

Cyngor Gwynedd is responsible for ensuring that it conducts its business in accordance with the law and to proper standards and that public money is safeguarded, properly accounted for, and used economically, efficiently and effectively. Cyngor Gwynedd also has a duty under the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of its functions, having regard in particular to strategic effectiveness, service quality, service availability, fairness, sustainability, efficiency and innovation.

In discharging these overall responsibilities, Cyngor Gwynedd is also responsible for putting in place proper arrangements for the governance of its affairs, facilitating the effective exercise of its functions, and which includes arrangements for the management of risk and adequate and effective financial management.

Cyngor Gwynedd has approved and adopted a Code of Corporate Governance which is consistent with the principles of the CIPFA/SOLACE Framework, *Delivering Good Governance in Local Government*. A copy of the code is available on our website, or may be obtained by writing to Cyngor Gwynedd, County Offices, Shirehall Street, Caernarfon, Gwynedd LL55 1SH. This statement explains how the Authority has complied with the code and also meets the requirements of regulation 5(5) Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014 in relation to publishing a statement on internal control.

Part 2: THE PURPOSE OF THE GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK

The governance framework comprises the systems and processes, and culture and values, by which the authority is directed and controlled and its activities through which it accounts to, engages with, and leads its communities. It enables the authority to monitor the achievement of its strategic objectives and to consider whether those objectives have led to the delivery of appropriate and cost effective services.

The system of internal control is a significant part of that framework and is designed to enable the Council to manage risk to a reasonable level. It cannot eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives and can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness. The system of internal control is based on an ongoing process designed to identify and prioritise the risks that are relevant to the achievement of the Council's policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood and potential impact of those risks being realised, and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically.

The governance framework described above has been in place at Cyngor Gwynedd for the year ending 31 March 2026 and remains applicable up to the date of the approval of the Statement of Accounts.

Part 3: GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS AND THEIR EFFECTIVENESS

3.1 The **Governance Arrangements Assessment Group** monitors matters of governance continuously in a disciplined manner, raising a wider awareness of these, and promoting a wider ownership of the Annual Governance Statement. The Group comprises the Corporate Director, the Monitoring Officer, the Section 151 Officer, Head of Corporate Support, Assistant Head of Corporate Support, Assistant Head of Finance, the Risk and Insurance Manager and the Council Business Service Support Manager.

3.2 To reflect the CIPFA/SOLACE Framework - *Delivering Good Governance in Local Government*, the local framework is set out in the form of a Governance Risk Register that is part of the Corporate Risk Register, identifying 24 areas of governance risks.

3.3 An outline is given of the Governance Areas, how they link to the CIPFA/SOLACE principles, the relevant risks and the Council's arrangements to deal with these, are in the remainder of this section of the Annual Governance Statement.

CIPFA/SOLACE Framework Core Principle A: Behave with integrity, demonstrating a strong commitment to ethical values, and respect for the rule of law.

Culture

- A review of the progress of Ffordd Gwynedd was carried out across the Council in collaboration with Cabinet and a Task and Finish Group with members from among the members of the Governance and Audit Committee. That led to a new 5-year Work Programme to 2028 which was approved by Cabinet on 7 March 2023. The Plan identifies nine areas that the Council will focus on in order to further embed the "way of working".
- A Lead Group (the Council's Corporate Management Team) has been established with a focus on one of the workstreams at each monthly meeting. The Group maintains an overview of the implementation of the Work Programme and offers guidance on embedding the culture within the Council. A Group of officers leading on the individual workstreams meets monthly under the chairmanship of the Corporate Director while a Practitioner Group has been formed to support individuals driving reviews within their services.
- An annual report is presented on the progress of the work culture which is based on the conclusions of a self-assessment that each Department is asked to undertake and also on the results of the “Llais Staff” Survey which is carried out every twelve months.

Conduct

- The Council has adopted codes of conduct for its members and officers, based on national regulations (codes such as the Member/Officer Relationship Code; the Members Code of Conduct; the Code of Conduct for Officers; The Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy and the Whistleblowing Code of Practice) and these together lay the foundation for ensuring integrity and ethics.
- There is clear evidence that the Council gives legitimate consideration to the Ombudsman's reports as part of the work of the Standards Committee, which is working effectively.

Lawfulness

- Everything the Council does has to comply with the law. Statutory officers (the Monitoring Officer and Head of Finance) must comment on any formal decision, as part of a comprehensive Constitution that is regularly reviewed. The role of statutory officers is a core part of the Council's governance arrangements.

CIPFA/SOLACE Framework Core Principle B. Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement

Being open

- The minimum possible number of Committee reports is exempt, and in addition to the publication of full committee minutes, individual members' decision sheets are publicised, with procedures in place to ensure this happens. Background papers are published with committee reports to ensure that decisions are made with full information. A number of meetings of decision-making committees are webcast.
- The Council publishes its Corporate Plan, Annual Performance Report and Statement of Accounts to try and provide as much information as residents would need to hold us accountable. Various other methods are also used such as the website and social media to try to ensure that the residents of Gwynedd are aware of what is happening within the Council.

Stakeholders

- The willingness of public sector bodies, including Cyngor Gwynedd, other neighbouring unitary councils, the Police, the Health Board, the third sector and others to co-operate in order to deliver joint public services can have a significant, visible impact on the People of Gwynedd, as part of the requirements of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.
- A Public Service Board has been established and meets regularly.

Engagement

- A range of corporate engagement procedures have been put in place to ensure that we receive the views of the public and other stakeholders as appropriate.

CIPFA/SOLACE Framework Core Principle C: Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits

Direction and vision

- The Council's Plan 2023-28 was approved by the full Council on the 2nd of March, 2023. The Plan includes our ambition and projects under 7 priority areas. The plan has been reviewed annually in March since its adoption.

Sustainability

- Since May 2023 reports submitted to Cabinet are required to highlight how the contents of the report reflect the requirements of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.
- Training sessions have been held with elected members to increase awareness of the Act in October 2022 and 2024.
- The Council has already adopted a Sustainable Procurement Policy which is in line with the principles of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. By adopting the Policy, it is intended to consider the potential social, economic and environmental impact that our procurement decisions may have and what steps can be taken to make the best use of Council spending, for the benefit of the County.

CIPFA/SOLACE Framework Core Principle D: Determine the interventions necessary to maximise the delivery of the intended outcomes

Decisions

- There is evidence over the last few years that Cyngor Gwynedd is prepared to take difficult decisions, but only after considering the evidence in detail.

Planning Operations

- The Council strives to maintain a suitable balance between having Project Management procedures in place and working efficiently. In that regard, the Council already maintains robust project management arrangements for the largest projects, using a less comprehensive version but based on the same principles for other projects.
- The Council has a Medium-Term Financial Plan, with annual budgets based on that. The Council's work on financial planning is regularly praised by the external auditors, and the Governance and Audit Committee takes a leading role on financial scrutiny.

Reviewing Outcomes

- The Council's risk assessment, Corporate Plan formulation and project management arrangements ensure that the intended outcomes at the start of any project are clear. The annual performance report seeks to focus on assessing the extent to which those outcomes have been achieved.

CIPFA/SOLACE Framework Core Principle E: Develop the capacity of the entity, including the capacity of its leadership and the individuals within it

Property Assets

- A new Asset Management Plan for the 10-year period 2024-2034 has been adopted by the Council on 11 July 2024.

Information Technology Assets

- A new Digital Plan for the period 2023-28 has been adopted; it was scrutinised by the Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee in September 2023 and formally approved by Cabinet in November 2023. An annual report was presented to the Cabinet on 16 December 2025.

Workforce Planning

- The Workforce Planning Project Board has agreed on long-term objectives and a list of sub-projects for the period leading up to March 2028.
- Exit interview arrangements and a new jobs website are in place.

Leadership

- The series of Managers and Team Leaders Network meetings (held twice a year) is a key part of the shift of emphasis from a culture of "management" to "leading" within the Council.
- A specific project continues to have a high improvement priority in relation to Women in Leadership within the Council. The Council recognises that the number of women fulfilling a managerial role within the Council is disproportionate to the division of the entire workforce and therefore seeks to boost the number of women applying for and reaching senior positions within the Council.
- The Corporate Management Team is committed to its development, with each team member completing a personal profile and attending regular workshops in order to develop as an individual leader and to reinforce the ability to take full advantage of operating as a team.
- Similarly, the new Cabinet formed in December 2024 is committed to its development at the level of individual members and as a team.

Customer Contact

- In-depth analysis carried out and presented to Members in October 2022 with a programme of work identified and the risk added to the corporate governance risks. Planning calls are being received directly from the Planning Service from the 1st of April, 2023 and a short training module has been piloted for all staff dealing with enquiries.
- A Plan for Working for the Future was adopted in September 2023.

CIPFA/SOLACE Framework Core Principle F: Risk and performance management through sound internal control and strong control over public funds

Risk Management

- There are strong arrangements for monitoring our compliance with certain types of operational risks. All risks in the Corporate Risk Register have been considered from the perspective of the risk to the People of Gwynedd, not from the Council's intrusive perspective.
- The Council's systems for identifying, assessing, recording and reporting risks are constantly evolving.

Performance

- Officers and Members continually question whether we are measuring the right things. There are regular meetings with Cabinet Members and management to assess the latest performance with members of the relevant Scrutiny Committee also present to give a challenge.
- Since April 2025, regular performance reports from Cabinet members on their areas of responsibility are submitted to meetings of the Scrutiny Committees, where previously the reports went to Cabinet. This change is seen as a key step in improving challenge and accountability.
- Complaints are also a key way to get information to improve. The Corporate Complaints Regime continues to develop well. The Service Improvement Officer ensures that we learn lessons from complaints, and avoids repeating mistakes.

Internal Control

- Reviewing and adapting internal controls so that they are proportionate to what is needed is core to the aim of putting the people of Gwynedd at the centre of everything we do, removing over-bureaucratic tasks. Removing barriers is part of everyone's job, resulting in an appropriate level of internal control. The efficiency of the Internal Audit regime is under ongoing review, and a self-assessment shows that the service meets professional standards as expected. The Governance and Audit Committee has an agreed terms of reference which is reviewed regularly. There is evidence that the Governance and Audit Committee is very effective in fulfilling its functions.

Information

- The Council's Information Plan 2021-2026 (2024 update) includes a number of plans for addressing the risks of information management and data use.
- The cross-departmental Information Group takes a corporate overview of this area.

Finance

- The Council has effective arrangements for financial planning and management, including accountants and internal auditors, led by the chief finance officer.
- Internal auditors have a focus on effective arrangements and controls in financial systems, while the accountants work closely with the departments and encourage managers' ownership of their systems, performance, and financial appropriateness.
- The review of expenditure against budgets, and monitoring that savings have been achieved by all Council departments, ensures that the services are operating efficiently. The revenue expenditure situation is reported to the Governance and Audit Committee and Cabinet but as the need to find savings continues, and demand for services increases, a situation can be envisaged where there are insufficient funds in the future to address the budget shortfall.

Health, Safety and Wellbeing

- Health and Safety Policy adopted by the Council which is reviewed annually.
- Specialist consultants available to advise. Mandatory training is provided for all Council staff.
- IOSH Safe Management training is provided to Managers and relevant staff, with various other training in place depending on the nature of responsibilities.
- Communication arrangements with a Corporate Forum and Advisory Panel including a dedicated intranet site with a host of guidelines and procedures.
- An accident reporting and investigation procedure has been established.

CIPFA/SOLACE Framework Core Principle G: Implement good practices in transparency, reporting, and audit to ensure effective accountability

Accountability

- The Council has provided guidance on the preparation of reports and on good decision-making, to ensure that the reports available to the public are clear.

Assurance

- Statutory officers ensure that matters comply with the law and constitution arrangements while the Chief Executive and Directors continually challenge whether departments are doing the right things.
- The Governance and Audit Committee keeps an overview of the governance arrangements as well as the implementation of external auditors' recommendations. This is supported by the Internal Audit Service operating in accordance with the statutory professional standards, the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards.
- Scrutiny arrangements have been reviewed a number of times in recent years, with Audit Wales's independent report in September 2023 identifying good progress in Gwynedd's standard of scrutiny.
- The scrutiny officers work closely with the Chairs/Vice-Chairs of the individual committees to ensure clarity and share best practice. This will develop further with the support of the Chief Executive and Directors on a regular basis in scrutiny committees.
- Training for the Corporate Management Team has taken place and an annual meeting will be held to review progress. Training for Members in relation to their responsibilities on factors to be taken into account in decision-making.

Part 4: ASSESSMENT OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF OUR GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

4.1 Cyngor Gwynedd has carried out a self-assessment of its governance arrangements in accordance with requirements CIPFA/Solace Framework *Delivering Good Governance in Local Government* and the requirements of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021. The assessment has highlighted the following in terms of mitigating the governance risks:

- The most notable progress on the Ffordd Gwynedd Plan is:

  Learning, Experimenting and Taking Action to Improve - The emphasis in the current Plan on carrying out reviews on smaller pieces of work systems, as well as carrying out reviews on whole systems, has borne fruit and all Departments in the Council are able to provide examples of reviews that have led to improvements during the year.

  Leadership - The new look Ffordd Gwynedd training programme has been reintroduced for managers during the year while the Manager Development Programme is going from strength to strength with the positive feedback from attendees.

  Support and Development – A new Learning and Development Framework has been launched with the programme for the first year focusing on basic training such as finance management, wellbeing and digital skills. The Senior Leadership Program, the Management Development Program and the Women in Leadership Program continue to showcase their value with a large number of officers eager to sign up on each occasion when a new series is announced.

  Workforce Planning and Talent Development – Seven work streams have been identified to drive this work forward. They range from running a "Ffordd Gwynedd" exercise on the whole process of attracting staff to work for the Council, to the need for the establishment of specific training schemes that greet rare skills and specialties, as well as the appropriate behaviours, which are necessary for future continuity of service.

  A Satisfied and Healthy Workforce - A new Well-being Strategy was approved by Cabinet at its meeting on 17 December, 2024. The Strategy is based on three foundations, namely leadership and management, sustainable support, and a work environment with mental, physical, social and financial well-being at the heart of what is sought to be achieved.

  Customer Contact - A cross-departmental Group has been established to formulate a Charter and Customer Contact Standards. That Charter, in its final draft form, will be submitted to Cabinet for adoption on July 8, 2025. There has been comprehensive consultation on the content of the Charter across Council services and this is a good example of seeking views on developments with staff.

- The Council has introduced a series of annual milestones for each of the projects in the Council's Plan to allow us to measure progress as well as plan work for the future. Work to further improve this is ongoing.
- The Council's Constitution is a public document that sets out the governance arrangements and a Guide to the Constitution is provided to reinforce this. The Governance Group has continued to meet regularly and maintains an overview of governance issues within the Council. The Group consists of the Corporate Director, the Monitoring Officer, the Section 151 Officer, the Head of Corporate Support, the Assistant Head of Corporate Support, the Risk & Insurance Manager and the Council's Business Support Service Manager.
- The Council publishes an Annual Governance Statement outlining our governance arrangements and their effectiveness following the principles of the CIPFA/Solace *Delivering Good Governance in Local Government* Framework.
- An annual workshop on assurance and risks will be held with external auditors (Audit Wales, Care Inspectorate Wales and Estyn).

- When recommendations are issued by external audit bodies, an institutional response will be prepared on behalf of the Council and the Governance and Audit Committee is responsible for reviewing and assessing the response along with progress against the recommendations.
- Appropriate arrangements are also in place to respond to any reports from the Health and Safety Executive (HSE).
- The main governance risks are scored both corporately and at the Department level as the level of risk varies. The internal Governance Group has an overview and is responsible for quality assurance within Cyngor Gwynedd.
- The Council has commissioned *Local Partnerships* to undertake a review of our governance arrangements, with the intention of providing the Council with an independent and objective challenge as well as offering any recommendations for improvement.
- While the regime and future risk management strategies are generally improving and strengthening, new arrangements have been put in place to try to standardise and try to harmonise the scores for very high risks. During 2025/26, our insurers were commissioned to review our risk management arrangements and their recommendations will be implemented during 2026/27.
- On the basis of Internal Audit work completed during 2025/26, it was considered that Cyngor Gwynedd's internal control framework during that financial year was operating at a level of reasonable assurance on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the Authority's governance, risk management and internal control framework.
- There are robust arrangements in place for supporting Elected Members in Gwynedd, with 97% of Gwynedd Councillors reporting that the service provided by the Democracy Team is very good. We will continue to build on these solid foundations in the year ahead.
- The Head of Finance has carried out a self-assessment of compliance with the CIPFA Financial Management Code, and updates it at least once a year and the current assessment shows high compliance across all of the standards. Since 2025, we have commissioned CIPFA to undertake an independent audit of the self-assessment, and the outcome of that work will be considered when designing a financial support service for the future.
- The Apprenticeship Scheme has provided an opportunity for over 90 apprentices since 2019 and the Graduate Scheme (“Cynllun Yfory”) has given an opportunity to over 40 professional trainees since 2017 with many of them having been offered a job with the Council.
- The 2024 “Llais Staff” Survey was conducted during a challenging period that included fiscal uncertainty, political changes in the Council, and a period of further changes to our 'working for the future' working arrangements following the pandemic. As a result, there has been a slight decrease in the level of staff satisfaction in response to most of the questions, but the level of satisfaction remains high for some of the key indicators e.g. the score for the statement 'the Council is a good place to work' is 80%, and 87% for "I've been motivated to do my best in my job for the benefit of the people of Gwynedd." As in last year's survey, this year's survey consisted of 4 parts – Me and my Well-being, Me and my job, Me and my service and Me and my Employer.
  The 2026 “Llais Staff” Survey was conducted during February and March 2026 and the results will be analysed during 2026/27.
- Trade Unions were consulted and asked for feedback on the following areas:
  - Comments on the authority's performance and areas for improvement
    - Is the Council carrying out its duties effectively?
    - Is the Council making the best use of the resources at its disposal?
    - Does the Council have arrangements in place to ensure it performs effectively?
  - Tips for improving staff engagement and wellbeing

  Among the responses, it was noted that there was room for improvement in communication with unions regarding staffing issues in some departments, and there was a recognition that there was some way to go in terms of Social Partnership (when groups such as local government, businesses and trade unions work together to make decisions), as this is a learning process.

- Gwynedd was part of the National Resident Survey, the first of its kind to be conducted in Wales. There were 3,094 responses to the survey.
- The number of Valid Formal Complaints has decreased this year compared to last year, but those that have gone to the Ombudsman have increased. We are still working on reducing the time taken to respond to complaints and aim for the new Customer Contact Charter being developed to have a positive impact on this.
- The Procurement Team provides advice and support to services and ensures that the organisation follows regulations and best practice in procurement.
- The extensive training programme for Elected Members continues and includes core training in seven specific areas:
    i. Safe Leadership and Personal Safety
    ii. Code of Conduct
    iii. Well-being of Future Generations Act
    iv. Safeguarding Children and Adults
    v. Your Responsibility for Equality
    vi. Your Responsibility as a Corporate Parent
    vii. Information About People: Your Responsibility
- Setting a balanced budget for 2027/28 will be challenging, particularly given the need to ensure that departmental budgets are adequate to provide the necessary level of services for the people of Gwynedd, and to avoid overspending as seen in 2024/25 and 2025/26.
- An internal review is underway to improve our Council Tax collection arrangements, and actions have been introduced to increase collection rates in the future. This work will continue to receive attention over the coming year. We are also keen to ensure that issues such as this receive early attention in the future and will be looking to review our arrangements to ensure this happens.
- A Strategic Equality Plan for 2024-28 has been developed to provide a framework to improve fairness within the Council and ensure that we treat people according to their needs, and this work is ongoing.
- Each year the Council prepares a Financial Strategy and sets a balanced Budget to ensure continuity of service.
- The Council also publishes a Statement of Accounts at the end of each financial year showing its annual expenditure. The review of expenditure against budgets and monitoring that savings have been achieved by all Council departments, ensures that the services are operating efficiently. However, as noted earlier, the increasing pressures on the Council's budget are making it harder for departments to maintain the same level of services within the budget provided, leading to a risk of overspending
- The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 has created new duties for Political Group Leaders to take an element of responsibility for promoting good behaviour and co-operating with the Standards Committee. A protocol and criteria for assessing the fulfilment of the duty were agreed in a workshop between the members of the Committee and the Leaders. These were adopted by the Standards Committee and would contribute to the preparation of the Committee's annual report. This work has been supported by regular meetings and communication with the Monitoring Officer.
- In accordance with the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021, a Panel Assessment on Cyngor Gwynedd's governance arrangements was undertaken during March 2026. The results of the Panel's work, and the recommendations of its report, will form the basis of the Council's governance developments during 2026/27.

4.2 For each of the Governance Risks, a current risk score is shown, which is the score after an objective assessment of the management arrangements currently in place. Two factors are taken into account:

- **Impact** of risk if the event is realised
- The **Probability** of it happening.

4.3 The Impact scores range from 1 (visible impact) to 5 (catastrophic impact), and the Probability scores of 1 (Very Unlikely) to 5 (happening now). The risk score is calculated by multiplying the impact score and the probability score together.

4.4 The relative level of risks is assessed as follows:

Score: 20-25	**Very High Risk**
Score: 12-16	**High Risk**
Score 6-10	**Medium Risk**
Score 1-5	**Low Risk**

4.5 Following the self-assessment set out above, the Governance Group assesses the risk scores in the 24 governance areas as follows:

Area	Risk	Effect	Likelihood	Risk Score
Culture	Inappropriate culture within the Council can hinder our ability to do the right things in the correct manner	4	3	**12**
Conduct	Lack of integrity, ethics and respect in the conduct of members and officers, undermining the public's confidence in the Council	2	2	**4**
Lawfulness	Ignoring the rule of law, which means that the Council is open to challenges from the courts.	3	1	**3**
Being open	Council that is not open, meaning that it is not possible to hold it accountable for its decisions	2	1	**2**
Stakeholders	Weak relationship with institutional stakeholders, ending with sub-optimal services	3	3	**9**
Engagement	Failure to engage effectively with service users and individual citizens leads to prioritisation and poor decision making	3	4	**12**
Direction and vision	Direction and vision that is not rooted in the outcomes for individuals and therefore does not realise the needs of the People of Gwynedd	3	2	**6**
Sustainability	Failing to comply with the five principles of the Well-being of Future Generations Act	3	3	**9**
Decisions	Unwillingness to make decisions on action, which means a delay in achieving the outcomes for the people of Gwynedd	2	2	**4**
Planning Operations	Intervention without sufficient planning	2	2	**4**
Reviewing outcomes	Continuing to do the same things incorrectly because we don't review the outcomes of our actions	3	2	**6**
Property Assets	The Council's property assets not used to their full potential	2	2	**4**
Information Technology Assets	The Council's Information Technology assets not used to their full potential	3	3	**9**
Workforce Planning	Failure to plan the workforce in terms of attracting, developing and retaining staff	3	3	**9**
Leadership	Deficiencies in the Council's leadership means that we are not doing the right things	4	2	**8**

Area	Risk	Effect	Likelihood	Risk Score
Risk Management	Weaknesses in our risk management arrangements that increase the threat of something going wrong or failure to take an opportunity to improve	5	2	**10**
Performance	Weaknesses in our performance management arrangements mean that we cannot take appropriate steps to achieve our purpose	2	2	**4**
Internal Control	Unsuitable internal control arrangements which means that we either do not protect ourselves from risks, or waste resources on over-control	2	2	**4**
Information Management	Failure to maximise the potential of information in supporting Council business and failure to meet statutory requirements	4	3	**12**
Finance	Overspending due to underfunding or lack of financial control	5	3	**15**
Accountability	Poor reporting, lack of transparency and unsuitable for the audience	2	2	**4**
Assurance	Lack of assurance and accountability that raises suspicion amongst the public regarding what the Council is doing	3	5	**15**
Health, Safety and Wellbeing	Ineffective Health, Safety and Wellbeing Management System	5	3	**15**
Customer Contact	Lack of timely response to enquiries	3	4	**12**

We have been advised on the implications of the result of **the review of the effectiveness of the governance framework** by the Governance and Audit Committee, and that the arrangements **continue to be regarded as fit for purpose in accordance with the governance framework**. The areas that have already been addressed and those which the Council will address specifically have new ongoing action plans and are outlined below.

Part 5. SIGNIFICANT GOVERNANCE ISSUES

5.1 The above scores show that none of the 24 areas of governance present a very high risk. 7 is high risk and 8 is medium risk.

5.2 The self-assessment has identified the following improvements that will be implemented in 2026-27.

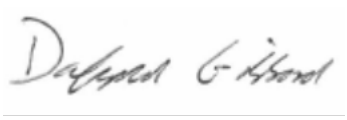
- In response to the recommendations of a study by Audit Wales we will be looking to improve our service commissioning arrangements.
- Improve training on risk identification and management.
- To act on the relevant recommendations in the Panel Assessment report.
- To act on the relevant recommendations in the Local Partnerships report.
- To act on the findings of the Staff Voice Survey, including appreciation and well-being.

5.3 An update on previous years' actions will be reported in Cyngor Gwynedd's Annual Performance Report and Self-Assessment 2025/26.

Part 6: OPINION

We are of the opinion that the governance arrangements described above offer assurance that our governance arrangements work well overall. However, we intend to take measures to deal with the matters noted in Part 4 above during next year in order to improve our governance arrangements. We are satisfied that these measures will deal with the need to improve as identified in the effectiveness review, and we will monitor their operation as part of the next annual review.

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DAFYDD GIBBARD

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF CYNGOR GWYNEDD

DATE: 18/09/2026

Cllr. NIA JEFFREYS

LEADER OF CYNGOR GWYNEDD

DATE: 18/09/2026